

## 2. Franklin County Profile

Franklin County separated from Oneida County on January 20, 1913 placing the county seat at Preston. It was named for the first city in Idaho, Franklin City, which in turn was named for Franklin Richards, an apostle of the Mormon Church. The settlement of the county began in Franklin City.

Agriculture has been the base of economic activity in Franklin County for many years. It also has determined the settlement patterns within the County. In the future, agriculture may have less relevance as the growth and development in the Cache Valley influences Franklin County.

### 2.1 Geography

Geography	Franklin County	Idaho
Land area, 2000 (square miles)	667	82,747
Persons per square mile, 2000	17.0	15.6
Metropolitan Area	Cache Valley, Utah	

### 2.2 Current Population and Population Trends

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, Franklin County and Preston had populations of 11,329 and 4,682 in the year 2000. Preston contributes approximately 40 percent of the County's total population. The County grew by 22.7 percent since 1990, somewhat slower than the 28.5 percent statewide rate. Based upon 2000 data, Franklin County had a population density of 17 persons per square mile, 22 percent greater than in 1990 (11,329 population divided by 667 square mile area), which ranks Franklin County as the 18<sup>th</sup> most densely populated county in the State.

#### 2.2.1 Historic Population

Franklin County's population has not grown smoothly. Between 1940 and 1970, the County actually lost population (almost 3,000 people). Since that time, the population has grown roughly one and one-half percent per year. Preston City's rate has been somewhat slower at just one percent per year. During the 1990s both jurisdictions grew at an average compounded rate of just over two percent. The statewide rate was 2.3 percent for the same period. The following table details the County's population change since 1920. The history of Franklin County's population shows a decrease just before World War II.

Year	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2003
Franklin Co.	8,650	9,379	10,229	9,867	8,457	7,373	8,895	9,232	11,329	11,874
Preston City	-	-	-	-	3,640	3,310	3,759	3,710	4,682	4,791

Source: U.S. Department of Commerce, Census Bureau

## **2.2.2 Population Forecasts**

### **Idaho Power Population Forecasts for Franklin County**

Idaho Power develops population forecasts for purposes of forecasting electricity demand. These are listed below. Their forecast roughly matches the 1970 to 2000 growth period.

<b>Year</b>	<b>Population</b>
2000	11,329
2010	12,685
2020	13,893

### **Preston City Water System Population Forecasts**

Preston City prepared population forecasts, using the exponential method, as a consideration in designing its new municipal water distribution system. The City identified possible future growth rates of 1.16, 1.9, and 2.3 percent. Forecasts, using these growth rates, through 2040 are shown:

<b>Year</b>	<b>1.16% Growth</b>	<b>1.9% Growth</b>	<b>2.3% Growth</b>
2010	5,252	5,649	5,875
2020	5,894	6,819	7,375
2030	6,615	8,231	9,258
2040	7,432	9,936	11,622

The City concluded, for purposes of forecasting demand for its pipe distribution system, that the 2.3 percent growth rate would be appropriate.

Regardless of the source for population forecasts, the undisputed fact is that Franklin County is growing. County residents believe that the changes in the transportation system will cause an increased fluctuation in this growth. Increased population will result in a larger urban interface area.

## **2.3 Tribes/Reservations**

There are no Indian reservations within Franklin County. However, there is a historical battleground site near Franklin City. This site is being purchased by the Shoshone-Bannock Tribe for a historical display.

## **2.4 Climate**

The weather in Franklin County can be described as a mild northern climate. Summer temperatures average in the high sixties, with days that can exceed 100 degrees. But these hot spells are usually short in duration or the afternoons are punctuated by clouds

and a brief rain shower. Winter temperatures average in the low twenties. The following table illustrates these temperature changes:

<b>Average Weather in Franklin County</b>	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Average temp. (°F)	21.3	26.4	36.6	45.0	53.5	61.9	69.4	68.2	58.6	46.9	33.6	23.3
High temperature (°F)	30.3	36.6	47.7	57.9	67.5	78.0	87.1	86.1	76.1	62.5	44.6	32.8
Low temperature (°F)	12.2	16.2	25.5	32.1	39.5	45.8	51.6	50.3	41.1	31.3	22.6	13.8
Precipitation (in.)	1.4	1.3	1.5	1.4	2.1	1.2	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.6	1.2	1.3

The wildfire season in Franklin County is June through September. The highest fire danger usually occurs in July and August. It is common to have numerous consecutive days of "Very High" to "Extreme" fire danger from July through September. Thunderstorms ignite most of the wildfires during the high fire danger periods, and can often start over 20 wildfires from one storm.

### **2.4.1 Drought**

Recent concerns about the effects of climate change, particularly drought, are contributing to concerns about wildfire vulnerability. The term drought is applied to a period in which an unusual scarcity of rain causes a serious hydrological imbalance. Unusually dry winters, or significantly less rainfall than normal, can lead to relatively drier conditions, and leave reservoirs and water tables lower. Drought leads to problems with irrigation, and may contribute to additional fires, or additional difficulties in fighting fires. However, most fuel types (not including grasses) require two or three years of drought before the fuel becomes dangerously dry.

There has been a drought in the county since 1999. To date, 2004 has been the worst part of the drought with low mountain snow packs. The change in the weather patterns that are creating this drought has also produced late spring and early summer showers that have increased the fire fuel supply. It has not been determined if the current weather patterns are cyclical or part of a larger global warming process. In either case, the weather patterns are contributing to an increased risk of wildland fires and urban interface dangers.

## **2.5 Topography**

The county consists of a plain with mountains on the east and west boundaries. The Bear River, Cub River and other drainages forms typical contours of a river flowing from a northerly to a southerly direction. The average elevation on the plain is about 4,700 feet. The WUI are typically at the base of these mountains and in these river contours within the mountains.

## **2.6 Soil & Geology**

The surface geology of Franklin County and the City of Preston area is covered by several hundred feet of glacial and inter-glacial sediments of the ice age. Exposed geologic units consist mainly of Vashon Drift from the last of the series of at least four ice age glaciations. Older sediments are also exposed in the area. These include stratified inter-glacial and glacial deposits of sand, silt, and clay.

The soils in the Preston area have been influenced by a variety of climates that range from cold/wet pre-glacial climate to the cool/dry post glacial climate of today. It is the reaction of this type of climate on mountains composed of sedimentary rock and lake deposits which dominate soil properties into the planning area.

Most of these soils below the Lake Bonneville shoreline are of two types. The first type is characterized by a dark top soil, weak subsoil development, and lie throughout the profile or immediately below the subsoil. These dominant soils are of the types Kearns, Kidman, and Lando. The second type is characterized by dark top soil and a strong subsoil development with layers of clay accumulation in the subsoil. Dominant soils of this type include the Battle Creek, Parleys, and Trenton soils.

The following table shows soil information for the farming area of Franklin County. Those soils are numbered 68, 109, 111, and 148 which consist of silty clay loams and silty loam soil. Soils 2, 65, 69, 109, 110, 111, 146 and 148 are considered prime farm land. These soils are slow to drain with a low permeability with a relatively high water table ranging from 2 to 3 feet below the surface in some areas and 6 to 8 feet in others. These soils are moderately to highly erodable.

Unit Description	Taxonomic Unit Description	Soil Name	Slope %
2	AFA	Ant Flat Silty Loam	0-2
67	TrA	Keamsar - Battle Creek Complex	0-4
68*	KdA	Kidman Fine Sandy Loam	0-2
69	KdB	Kidman Fine Sandy Loam	2-4
70	KdD	Kidman Fine Sandy Loam	20-40
106	OX	Oxford Banida Complex	12-20
107*	PaA	Parleys Silt Loam	0-4
110	PaC	Parleys Silt Loam	4-8
111*	PsA	Parleys Silt Loam Wet	0-2
123	PrA	Preston Fine Sand	0-2
124	PrB	Preston Fine Sand	2-6
125	PrC	Preston Loamy Sand	6-30

Unit Description	Taxonomic Unit Description	Soil Name	Slope %
146	WbA	Welby Silt Loam	0-2
148	WbW	Welby Silt Loam Wet	0-2

\* Most Dominant

The 1996 Soil Survey of Franklin County has been interpreted for multiple uses that are applicable to fire planning. The Appendix has the following maps of soil interpretation:

- Wildlife Habitat
- Land Use

## **2.7 Hydrology**

### **Bodies of Water**

There are no wild/scenic rivers within the planning area. Bear River and Cub River are the main waterways in Franklin County. Besides providing recreational opportunities and watershed provisions, the rivers and their tributaries provide a water source for fire engines and helicopters during wildfire suppression operations. Most rivers and creeks in Franklin County are accessible, with either a direct or adjacent road access.

Bear River and Cub River tributaries are: Cottonwood Creek, Maple Creek, Mink Creek, Strawberry Creek, Williams Creek and Worm Creek. There are several other minor tributaries. Worm Creek which is now controlled by the Foster Reservoir is primarily an irrigation source.

Irrigation reservoirs are Condie, Foster, Glendale, Lamont, Johnson, Narrows, Oxford, Strong Arm, Treasureton, Twin Lakes and Winder. Besides providing recreational opportunities and watershed provisions, these reservoirs can provide a water source for fire engines and helicopters during wildfire suppression operations.

River flow rates generally peak in June with low flow rates occurring in August and September, which is wildfire season. This water flow pattern limits the water available for fire protection.

There are no known sole source aquifers in Franklin County. There are multiple watersheds in Franklin County.

## **Public Drinking Water**

Many towns and communities rely on springs for their potable water sources. Bergquist Springs serves the largest population area of nearly 5,000 people. Other potable springs include Ranger, Birch, Five Mile, and Clifton. These springs are enclosed with the water being piped to each town. Other infrastructures associated with these water sources include pipe lines, pipe crossings, flow meters, storage tanks, chlorination facilities and hydroelectric plants. There are also private hydroelectric plants on other creeks.

The hydrology of Burgquist Springs has been investigated by DEQ. Preston's Source Water Assessment shows the area around the springs to be free of potential contaminants and the 10 year migration of water is within 10,000 foot radii of the springs. As the largest potable water source in the county, protection of the surrounding area should be given a high priority.

Annual precipitation in Franklin County averages about 16.5 inches. Approximately half of this rainfall returns directly to the atmosphere through evaporation and transpiration of plants. The remaining water leaves the area in the form of surface runoff or is stored in aquifers.

According to Soil Conservation Service (SCS) reports on the Preston area, the water table depth will vary from 2 to 6 feet in some areas and 6 to 8 feet in others. In 2001, monitoring wells in central Preston were showing water table depth at 12 feet.

## **2.8 Flora & Fauna**

Franklin County has a wide variety of wildlife species and habitat. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game manages wildlife population, and the U.S. Forest Service, BLM and Idaho Department of Lands are responsible for wildlife habitats on lands they manage. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) has classified the flora, fauna and other natural communities as:

### **2.8.1 Flora**

The most prevalent species in WUI areas are: maple, aspen, sagebrush, and Douglas fir.

### **2.8.2 Fauna**

Mammals that are found in Franklin County are: deer, elk, moose, bear, and the occasional wolf. Coyote, bobcat, badger, beaver, raccoons, porcupines and skunks can also be found.

Upland birds present include: grouse, pheasant, and turkey.

Waterfowl habitat is widespread throughout the county as it is on a minor flyway.

Waterfowl present include Canada geese, numerous duck species, swan and sandhill cranes.

Other Natural Communities, USDA does not list other natural communities, but other birds common to Franklin County are: flickers, woodpeckers, robins, killdeer, mountain bluebirds, hummingbirds, red-winged blackbirds, ravens, crows, and magpies.

The existing flora and fauna have been a part of the ecosystem since the 1880's when the County was first settled. Changes to that ecosystem have been the grazing of cattle. Appendix A contains a map of Wildlife habitat not on U.S. Forest Service lands.

## ***2.9 Archeological and Historic Sites***

A web search of archeological and historic sites identified the Idaho State Historical Society as the central repository of information on these topics. Their web site identified the following locations:

### ***2.9.1 Historic Places in Franklin County***

The National Register of Historic Places listed the following:

#### Franklin City:

- Franklin City Hall, 128 E Main St.
- Franklin Co-operative Mercantile, 113 E Main St.
- L.H. Hatch House, East Main.

#### Preston City:

- Bear River Battleground, NW Preston off U.S. 91
- Matthias Crowley House, 110 S. 1<sup>st</sup> E.
- Franklin County Courthouse, 39 W. Oneida
- Oneida Stake Academy, SW corner of S 1<sup>st</sup> E and Oneida
- U.S. Post Office, 55 E Oneida

#### Weston:

- Weston Canyon Rock shelter, Address restricted to protect this site

### ***2.9.2 Other Places of Community Value:***

- "Bob's Mart", Second J.C. Penny's store - Preston
- Ezra Taft Benson, Birthplace - Whitney
- Range Wars, Franklin
- Mink Creek's Klondike, Gold Hill Ranch
- Burnt Church Ranch

- Hwy 34 is a Scenic Byway
- Oneida Narrows Power Plant
- Willow Creek Campgrounds
- Scout Camp
- Twin Lakes Campground
- Cemeteries

## ***2.10 Recreation***

Recreation is critically important to the economy of Franklin County. Recreational assets are fishing, hunting, and snow activities. The close proximity to National forests contributes to making recreation based activities highly attractive.

Water-based activities are fishing, boating, swimming and water skiing. Land based activities include: off road vehicles, camping, hiking, mountain biking, bike racing, birding, hunting, snowmobiling, snowshoeing and cross country skiing. The more popular recreation areas in the county are:

- Glendale Reservoir
- Twin Lakes
- Willow Flats Campground
- Cub River

## ***2.11 Transportation and Commuting***

### ***2.11.1 Highways***

For an area of over 667 square miles, Franklin County has about 60 miles of roads maintained by Idaho Transportation Department and 350 miles of roads maintained by the County Road and Bridge Department. There is extensive use of the road system in Franklin County by out-of-county traffic. Franklin County receives no additional funds for added maintenance or road deterioration associated with this out-of-county use. The majority of vehicle transportation in Franklin County occurs on one of three paved State Highways:

- State Highway 91 connects the Cache Valley in Utah with Bannock County
- State Highway 34 connects the Cache Valley in Utah with Caribou County
- Oneida County is connected to Franklin County only by State Highway 36.

There are no connective east-west county roads. Connections to the south can be made by county roads, but there are few northerly connections outside of the County. Franklin County maintains a large number of bridges on its road system. These bridges do not always meet current bridge standards and have weight limits less than would be required for fire equipment. These bridges need to be upgraded to adequately serve fire needs.



### **2.11.2 Rail Transportation**

Union Pacific Railroad maintains two rail lines in the county: 1) a major rail line which connects Salt Lake and the switching yard in Pocatello for passenger/cargo going to Montana and Oregon and 2) a minor spur track from Utah ends in Preston.

### **2.11.3 USDA-Forest Service Roads**

The USDA Forest Service, Cache National Forest and Caribou National Forest, have built and maintain numerous two-lane gravel roads throughout the county for recreation, and logging. Some of these have been closed and many are currently gated with access allowed for seasonal use or during a wildfire. The National Forests have a Travel Plan with requirements for the trail system and off road or trail travel.

The existence of Federal and State forests and parks draws high numbers of recreational users participating in various spring, summer, fall and winter activities. Road funds come largely from County, State and Federal sources, augmented by Payment in Lieu of Taxes (PILT) funds paid by the U.S. Government for the surrounding government lands, i.e. BLM, National Forests. Recently the U.S. Government has failed to fully fund PILT payments, so the county has had addition burdens on their financial resources.

### **2.12 Aviation Facilities**

Franklin County has no regularly scheduled commercial (passenger/cargo) flights. The airport is located in the northwest corner of Preston. The airstrip's traffic increases during weekends and crop dusting season. It can also be used to support various fixed and rotor-wing aircraft during large or multiple wildfire incidents. Currently, there are plans to lengthen the runway, if grant funds can be acquired.

### **2.13 Emergency Services**

Franklin County has an organized response to emergencies. Responsibilities are assigned by organization:

**Franklin County Emergency Service and Civil Defense** has personnel trained in coordination during times of emergency.

**Search and Rescue** - is also coordinated by the Franklin County Emergency Service, utilizing the Sheriff's Office and FCFD.

**Law Enforcement** - Franklin County Sheriff provides law enforcement to the county and within the municipalities of Weston, Dayton, Clifton, Oxford, and Franklin. The City of Preston has it's own law enforcement. Idaho State Police provide additional law enforcement for the state's highways.

**Ambulance Services** - Franklin County provides ambulance Services to the entire county. They are located in Preston at the FCFD building.

**Hospital Services** - Franklin County Hospital is located in Preston.

**Fire Protection** - Franklin County Fire District provided for the entire county. Mutual assistance agreements between FCFD and the surrounding counties in Idaho and Utah are in effect to provide emergency fire protection for structures from wildfires. Mutual assistance agreements are also in effect between FCFD, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Forest Services for wildfire protection in the county.

